UNCLASSIFIED / OPEN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE SYNTHESIS

Public Indicators of U.S. Catastrophic-Risk Preparedness

Scope: 2024-2026 federal continuity, critical infrastructure, medical countermeasure, energy, supply-chain, space-weather, pandemic, nuclear/CBRN, and planetary-defense signals.

Key analytic judgment: public evidence verifies broad catastrophic-risk preparation, but does not verify a single known imminent cataclysmic event.

- The strongest documented preparation signal is a government-wide resilience and continuity review ordered in March 2025.[1]
- The clearest sequestered resources are energy reserves, medical countermeasures, active pharmaceutical ingredients, and strategic materials.[2][3]
- The most plausible near-term catastrophic pattern in public sources is a compound infrastructure shock: extreme weather, cyber activity, grid stress, or biological spillover interacting with response-capacity gaps.[4][5]

Prepared: May 1, 2026

Analytic standard: facts and confidence levels separated from inference; no classified or illicitly obtained information used.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. DOE Strategic Petroleum Reserve: https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/opr/spr-quick-facts
3. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/
4. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf
5. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf

EXECUTIVE JUDGMENT

What the evidence supports

Bottom line. The public record does not substantiate a confirmed, government-known, single imminent cataclysm. It does substantiate a broad reset of national resilience, continuity, critical infrastructure, emergency management, and supply-chain policy during 2024-2026.[1][2]

Highest-confidence preparation signal. EO 14239 ordered a National Resilience Strategy, review of critical-infrastructure policies, review of continuity policies, review of preparedness and response policies, a National Risk Register, and a proposal for National Essential Functions constructs on fixed 2025-2026 deadlines.[1]

Most sensitive public clue. Several governing artifacts are explicitly non-public or limited distribution: medical countermeasure requirements, exact stockpile quantities, critical-infrastructure systemically important entity lists, and some continuity policy text. The absence of those details is normal for national security planning and is not proof of a hidden countdown.[3][4]

Most likely catastrophic scenario class. Public sources point toward compound infrastructure disruption rather than an asteroid or single geophysical trigger. The highest-risk combination is cyber pre-positioning, grid stress, extreme weather, medical-supply fragility, and response-capacity gaps.[2][5][6]

Analytic question	Assessment	Confidence
Is one imminent event identified in official unclassified sources?	No. Official sources describe all-hazards, adversary, continuity, space weather, biosecurity, and supply-chain risks, not a named near-term catastrophe.	High
Is the government preparing for catastrophic disruption?	Yes. The policy, stockpile, continuity, cyber, grid, and MCM record shows broad preparation.	High
How much time remains?	No public countdown exists. For many mandated policy actions, public deadlines already elapsed by May 2026; for operational hazards, warning can range from minutes to years.	Medium

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf
3. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
4. CRS on NSM-22 critical infrastructure: https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF12716.html
5. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf
6. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf

PUBLIC EVIDENCE MAP

Preparation signals versus unsupported interpretations

The indicators below are the strongest public signals that the U.S. government is preparing for severe disruption. The right column states what each signal cannot prove by itself.

Signal	What it indicates	What it does not prove	Confidence
Resilience and continuity review	A top-level policy reset of national resilience, continuity, preparedness, critical infrastructure, and federal mission constructs.[1]	A known date for a single catastrophic event.	High
Critical infrastructure risk-management overhaul	CISA and sector agencies are moving toward risk management, systemically important entity identification, and minimum standards discussions.[2]	That all owners have been hardened or that standards are fully enforceable.	High
Medical countermeasure planning	HHS is maintaining threat-based MCM requirements, annual SNS reviews, and response-trigger planning.[3]	Exact quantities or sufficiency for a nationwide prolonged event.	High / limited detail
Space weather monitoring	NASA and NOAA confirmed solar maximum and expect additional solar and geomagnetic storms during the active phase.[4]	A predicted Carrington-scale storm on a specific date.	High
Planetary-defense exercises	NASA/FEMA and international partners exercise asteroid-impact response scenarios.[5]	That the fictional exercise asteroid is real.	High
National Preparedness Report gaps	Mass care, long-term housing, infrastructure, resource restoration, and cyber remain documented gaps.[6]	That collapse is inevitable.	High

Analytic note. The pattern is best read as a risk-governance and resilience posture under stress. It is not an evidentiary basis for asserting that officials know of a secret asteroid, solar event, nuclear strike, or other dated impact.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. CRS on NSM-22 critical infrastructure: https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF12716.html
3. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
4. NASA/NOAA solar maximum announcement: https://science.nasa.gov/science-research/heliophysics/nasa-noaa-sun-reaches-maximum-phase-in-11-year-solar-cycle/
5. NASA CNEOS PDC25 exercise page: https://cneos.jpl.nasa.gov/pd/cs/pdc25/
6. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf

ACTIONS UNDERWAY

Government preparation timeline and deadlines

Several preparation mandates have fixed public timelines. As of May 1, 2026, the main EO 14239 deadlines have already passed unless delayed, superseded, or completed without public release.[1]

Action	Public deadline from source	Status implication as of May 1, 2026
National Resilience Strategy	Within 90 days of Mar. 19, 2025.[1]	Should have reached decision or drafting stage in mid-2025; public release was not located in this review.
Critical infrastructure policy review	Within 180 days.[1]	Should have matured by fall 2025; overlaps with NSM-22 implementation and potential revision.
Continuity policy review	Within 180 days.[1]	Potentially affects NSM-32, EO 13961 remnants, EO 13618, and federal mission resilience architecture.
Preparedness and response policy review	Within 240 days.[1]	Should have matured by late 2025; affects HSPD-5, PPD-8, PPD-44, and related doctrine.
National Risk Register	Within 240 days.[1]	Should exist or be delayed internally; public U.S. register was not located in open sources reviewed.
National Essential Functions construct proposal	Within 1 year.[1]	Due around Mar. 2026; directly relevant to COG/COOP architecture.
SAPIR critical drug list and repository readiness	30 days for 26-drug list; 120 days to ready repository; 90 days for 86-medicine plan; second repository proposal within 1 year.[2]	The API reserve should be in execution planning; actual fill depends on funds and domestic supply.
Grid reserve-margin methodology	30 days to develop; 90 days to publish methodology and analysis.[3]	DOE should have a reserve-margin methodology and at-risk region process if implemented on schedule.

Time assessment. The public deadlines are not a countdown to an event; they are implementation clocks. The notable finding is that many clocks have reached zero, so the current question is whether deliverables were implemented, delayed, or kept non-public.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/
3. White House electric grid EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/strengthening-the-reliability-and-security-of-the-united-states-electric-grid/

SEQUESTERED RESOURCES

What is being held, rebuilt, or directed

Resource lane	Publicly documented reserve or action	Assessment
Strategic Petroleum Reserve	DOE reported 411 million barrels in the SPR as of Apr. 16, 2026, stored in 61 caverns at four Gulf Coast sites; maximum nominal drawdown is 4.4 million barrels/day and oil can enter the market 13 days after a Presidential decision.[1]	High-confidence energy buffer, but not full historical capacity.
Strategic National Stockpile	ASPR budget materials and PHEMCE planning describe the SNS as a federal reserve of medical countermeasures, pharmaceuticals, PPE, devices, and supplies for CBRN, pandemic influenza, and emerging infectious disease response.[2][3]	High-confidence existence; exact quantities and sufficiency are sensitive or non-public.
Medical countermeasure requirements	PHEMCE states the Medical Countermeasure Portfolio Review is provided to Congress as For Official Use Only because stockpiled quantities and gaps are sensitive.[3]	The sensitivity is explicit, but it limits public verification.
Strategic API Reserve	The Aug. 2025 EO directed ASPR to identify about 26 critical drugs, ready the repository, obtain a 6-month API supply, update the 86-medicine list, and propose a second repository.[4]	Strong supply-chain disruption signal; operational status depends on funding and execution.
Critical minerals and strategic materials	DLA Strategic Materials is the leading U.S. agency for analysis, planning, procurement, and management of materials critical to national security, storing commodities at six U.S. locations.[5]	Strong defense-industrial resilience signal; exact inventory and acquisition schedules are only partly public.
Grid reliability capacity	The April 2025 grid EO directed DOE to streamline emergency orders, build reserve-margin methodology, and retain critical generation resources over 50 MW where appropriate.[6]	Not a stockpile, but a capacity-reserve posture.

1. DOE Strategic Petroleum Reserve: https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/opr/spr-quick-facts
2. ASPR FY2025 budget highlights: https://aspr.hhs.gov/AboutASPR/BudgetandFunding/Pages/2025POTUS-budget-highlights.aspx
3. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
4. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/
5. DLA Strategic Materials: https://www.dla.mil/Strategic-Materials/
6. White House electric grid EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/strengthening-the-reliability-and-security-of-the-united-states-electric-grid/

SENSITIVE LANES

What is deliberately non-public or incomplete

The user asked for the best, most accurate, and sensitive information. This brief uses lawful public sources only. The most sensitive usable evidence is not secret data; it is the official boundary around what the government says it cannot publish.

Non-public or limited-detail lane	Public evidence	Analytic value
SNS quantities and gaps	PHEMCE says the MCM Portfolio Review is FOUO due to sensitivity around stockpiled quantities; annual threat-based SNS reviews identify gaps and requirements.[1]	Confirms active requirements management but blocks public sufficiency assessment.
Systemically important critical-infrastructure entities	NSM-22 directs identification of a non-public list of entities whose disruption could cause cascading national failures.[2]	Highly significant: it shows federal focus on cascading failure nodes.
Continuity doctrine transitions	EO 14239 ordered continuity-policy review, while EO 14146 partially revoked portions of EO 13961. Older HSPD-20 continuity doctrine includes no-warning assumptions and alternate-site readiness concepts.[3][4][5]	Suggests the continuity architecture is being rewritten, not that an event date is known.
National Risk Register	EO 14239 ordered creation of a National Risk Register within 240 days.[3]	If completed, it would be among the most important risk-prioritization artifacts; public release was not located.
Classified threat intelligence	ODNI's public Annual Threat Assessment provides high-level judgments but necessarily excludes classified details.[6]	Useful for direction of travel, not exact attack timing.

Guardrail. A non-public list or FOUO annex should be treated as an uncertainty boundary. It is not legitimate evidence for inventing quantities, dates, targets, or hidden causes.

1. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
2. CRS on NSM-22 critical infrastructure: https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF12716.html
3. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
4. Federal Register EO 14146: https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/01/24/2025-01759/partial-revocation-of-executive-order-13961
5. HSPD-20 National Continuity Policy: https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML0713/ML071350559.pdf
6. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf

HAZARD CLOCK

Public risk windows and warning horizons

Hazard	Public status	Time remaining / warning horizon	Confidence
Cyber / grid	ODNI identifies the PRC as the most active and persistent cyber threat to U.S. government, private-sector, and critical-infrastructure networks; FERC warns extreme weather can tighten supply in several regions.[1][2]	No reliable public countdown. Some cyber effects can be no-notice; grid stress is forecastable hours to seasons ahead.	High for risk; low for timing
Extreme weather / infrastructure	FEMA reports rising billion-dollar disasters and persistent gaps in mass care, housing, infrastructure systems, and resource restoration.[3]	Ongoing seasonal hazard. Warning ranges from minutes for flash floods/tornadoes to days for hurricanes and heat.	High
Space weather	NASA/NOAA announced solar maximum in Oct. 2024 and anticipated additional solar and geomagnetic storms.[4]	Open elevated window around solar maximum. Specific geomagnetic storm warning is generally hours to days.	High
H5N1 / biological	CDC describes widespread avian influenza in wild birds, poultry, and dairy cattle, with sporadic human cases and no known person-to-person spread in the cited public summaries.[5]	No pandemic countdown. Trigger would be sustained human-to-human transmission, which could compress response to weeks.	Medium-high
Nuclear / CBRN	ODNI describes major-state catastrophic capabilities and CBRN concerns; HHS and DOE maintain response and MCM systems.[1][6]	No public attack date. Escalation is geopolitical and could be rapid.	High for capability; low for timing
Near-Earth objects	NASA states 2024 YR4 poses no significant impact risk after additional observations, and PDC25 is explicitly fictional.[7][8]	No known near-term impact clock.	High

The clock is therefore not one countdown. It is a set of overlapping windows: continuous cyber and information pressure, seasonal weather and grid stress, an open biological mutation risk, elevated solar activity, and long-cycle planetary-defense surveillance.

1. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf
2. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf
3. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf
4. NASA/NOAA solar maximum announcement: https://science.nasa.gov/science-research/heliophysics/nasa-noaa-sun-reaches-maximum-phase-in-11-year-solar-cycle/
5. CDC bird flu current situation: https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/situation-summary/index.html
6. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
7. NASA 2024 YR4: https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/asteroids/2024-yr4/
8. NASA CNEOS PDC25 exercise page: https://cneos.jpl.nasa.gov/pd/cs/pdc25/

MOST PLAUSIBLE SCENARIO CLASS

Compound infrastructure shock

The public record most strongly supports preparation for compound, cascading disruption. This is less cinematic than a single cataclysm, but operationally more dangerous because the failure modes reinforce one another.

Phase	Mechanism	Why it matters
Trigger	A severe weather event, geomagnetic storm, cyberattack, major grid shortfall, biological surge, or geopolitical crisis starts the incident.[1][2]	The first trigger may be natural, accidental, or adversarial.
Amplification	Adversary cyber pre-positioning, ransomware, misinformation, or telecom disruption slows warning, logistics, and recovery.[3]	The second hit turns a disaster into a cascading event.
Infrastructure stress	FERC identifies regions facing tight generation availability under extreme weather and highlights gas-electric coordination as critical.[1]	Power, gas, communications, water, and health systems are mutually dependent.
Public-health and supply-chain drag	ASPR and SAPIR actions focus on medical countermeasures, APIs, and domestic supply resilience.[4][5]	A response can fail even when the first incident is not medical.
Emergency-management bottleneck	FEMA's own preparedness report highlights mass care, long-term housing, infrastructure systems, cyber, resource restoration, and business reopening gaps.[2]	Gaps determine duration of harm after the acute event.

Analytic judgment. If there is a near-term catastrophic concern visible in open sources, it is not a hidden planet-killer. It is the fragility of interconnected systems under simultaneous stress.

1. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf
2. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf
3. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf
4. ASPR FY2025 budget highlights: https://aspr.hhs.gov/AboutASPR/BudgetandFunding/Pages/2025POTUS-budget-highlights.aspx
5. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/

GAPS AND REMAINING ACTIONS

What government still needs to do

Priority	Remaining action	Time pressure
Publish or operationalize risk architecture	Clarify the National Resilience Strategy, National Risk Register, continuity review outcomes, and National Essential Functions construct ordered by EO 14239.[1]	Past due or internal by May 2026.
Close critical-infrastructure prevention gap	Move from voluntary baselines and planning to enforceable minimum resilience requirements for systemically important entities where statutory authority allows.[2]	Continuous; adversary activity is already present in public threat assessments.
Rebuild emergency-management capacity	Address FEMA's documented capability gaps in mass care, long-term housing, infrastructure systems, cyber, resource restoration, and reopening businesses.[3]	Before next major seasonal disaster cycle.
Harden grid and gas-electric coordination	Implement cold-weather and extreme-temperature standards, identify at-risk regions, and retain critical generation resources where needed.[4][5]	Ongoing, with region-specific seasonal pressure.
Verify medical and API sufficiency	Fund and execute SAPIR repository fill, update the 86-medicine list, and continue annual threat-based SNS gap reviews.[6][7]	High: the EO deadlines already initiated execution.
Restore and prioritize strategic reserves	Continue SPR replenishment and strategic-materials planning tied to defense and supply-chain vulnerability.[8][9]	Medium: long lead times make late action ineffective.
Strengthen warning systems and public readiness	Improve alert uptake, emergency supplies, public information, and sheltering capacity identified as gaps by FEMA.[3]	Immediate: public behavior determines casualties in fast-onset events.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. CRS on NSM-22 critical infrastructure: https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF12716.html
3. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf
4. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf
5. White House electric grid EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/strengthening-the-reliability-and-security-of-the-united-states-electric-grid/
6. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/
7. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
8. DOE Strategic Petroleum Reserve: https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/opr/spr-quick-facts
9. DLA Strategic Materials: https://www.dla.mil/Strategic-Materials/

TIME REMAINING

There is no single public countdown

Clock type	Publicly supported estimate	Operational meaning
EO 14239 policy deadlines	90, 180, 240 days, and 1 year from the March 2025 order; by May 2026 these clocks have reached zero if not extended or delayed.[1]	Look for release, implementation, or non-public continuation.
SAPIR implementation	30-day list, 90-day medicines update, 120-day repository readiness, API placement after certification, and second-repository proposal within 1 year.[2]	Time is now execution-dependent, not planning-dependent.
Grid reliability	DOE methodology deadlines were 30 and 90 days from Apr. 8, 2025; FERC/NERC operational risk varies by season and region.[3][4]	Blackout risk can be seasonal, weather-driven, or adversary-driven.
Space weather	NASA/NOAA confirmed solar maximum and expected additional storms; event-specific warnings generally compress to hours or days.[5]	Preparation must be pre-event, not after flare detection.
H5N1 / pandemic	CDC public summaries show ongoing animal outbreaks and sporadic human cases, but no known sustained person-to-person spread.[6]	The clock would change sharply if human-to-human transmission appears.
Near-Earth objects	NASA says 2024 YR4 poses no significant impact risk; PDC25 is explicitly fictional.[7][8]	No public near-term asteroid clock.
Extreme weather	FEMA's preparedness data show frequent high-cost disasters and capability gaps.[9]	The clock is seasonal and local; readiness time is before hurricane, wildfire, heat, flood, and winter-storm windows.

Practical answer. Remaining time for known policy preparation is largely spent. Remaining time for hazards varies from no-notice to years. The right stance is readiness for compound disruption, not waiting for a single date.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. White House Strategic API Reserve EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/08/ensuring-american-pharmaceutical-supply-chain-resilience-by-filling-the-strategic-active-pharmaceutical-ingredients-reserve/
3. White House electric grid EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/strengthening-the-reliability-and-security-of-the-united-states-electric-grid/
4. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf
5. NASA/NOAA solar maximum announcement: https://science.nasa.gov/science-research/heliophysics/nasa-noaa-sun-reaches-maximum-phase-in-11-year-solar-cycle/
6. CDC bird flu current situation: https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/situation-summary/index.html
7. NASA 2024 YR4: https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/asteroids/2024-yr4/
8. NASA CNEOS PDC25 exercise page: https://cneos.jpl.nasa.gov/pd/cs/pdc25/
9. FEMA 2024 National Preparedness Report: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CMR-HS5_100-00193235/pdf/CMR-HS5_100-00193235.pdf

INDICATOR WATCHLIST

Signals that would change the assessment

The following public indicators would materially change confidence in near-term risk. They are watch items, not predictions.

Indicator	Why it matters	Escalation threshold
DOE emergency grid orders	Federal Power Act emergency orders can indicate acute reserve or reliability problems.[1]	Multiple regions or repeated orders in a short period.
CISA or ODNI critical-infrastructure warnings	Would clarify whether pre-positioning or exploitation has shifted to disruption.[2]	Warnings tied to operational technology, water, energy, telecom, or logistics.
CDC H5N1 transmission change	Sustained human-to-human transmission would change the clock from spillover to pandemic response.[3]	Unlinked human clusters, efficient respiratory spread, or receptor-binding adaptation.
PHEMCE/SNS emergency procurement	Rapid MCM movement can indicate a specific threat class, though not necessarily an event date.[4]	Large sole-source buys or emergency-use triggers tied to a named agent.
FERC/NERC reliability alerts	Resource adequacy and extreme-temperature assessments can expose near-term grid stress.[5]	Projected shortfalls under normal, not just extreme, conditions.
NASA/JPL Torino-scale movement	Planetary defense risk is transparent when a real object requires contingency planning.[6]	Persistent Torino level above routine monitoring after follow-up observations.
National Risk Register release	Would show official prioritization of catastrophic scenarios.[7]	High-risk categories linked to funding or mandatory standards.

1. White House electric grid EO: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/strengthening-the-reliability-and-security-of-the-united-states-electric-grid/
2. ODNI 2025 Annual Threat Assessment: https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf
3. CDC bird flu current situation: https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/situation-summary/index.html
4. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
5. FERC 2025-2026 Winter Assessment: https://www.ferc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/Winter%20Assessment%202025-2026%20Long%20Version.pdf
6. NASA CNEOS Torino Scale: https://cneos.jpl.nasa.gov/sentry/torino_scale.html
7. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/

FINAL ASSESSMENT

What to conclude now

Assessment 1: no verified single imminent cataclysm. The official open-source record does not identify a dated asteroid impact, solar superstorm, nuclear strike, pandemic threshold, or other single event that governments are secretly preparing around. This is a high-confidence negative finding for public sources reviewed.

Assessment 2: broad catastrophic-readiness posture is real. The U.S. government is actively reviewing continuity and preparedness doctrine, identifying critical-infrastructure risk, maintaining CBRN and pandemic medical countermeasures, directing API reserves, monitoring space weather and NEOs, managing energy and strategic-material reserves, and hardening grid reliability.[1][2][3][4]

Assessment 3: the risk is systemic, not singular. The strongest public concern is that multiple stressors can converge faster than institutions can respond: cyber pre-positioning, extreme weather, grid/gas interdependence, medical supply fragility, and emergency-management capability gaps.[5][6][7]

Assessment 4: the time problem is implementation. Many public deadlines for strategy, register-building, continuity review, grid methodology, and API reserve planning have passed or should be in execution. The key unanswered question is not when a secret event arrives, but whether the preparedness system closed the gaps before the next severe compound incident.

No single public countdown	Compound-risk window open	Critical gaps documented
Stockpiles exist but details limited	Policy clocks mostly elapsed	Best action: resilience now

Confidence: high for documented preparedness actions and resource lanes; medium for sufficiency of reserves due to non-public quantities; low for any precise timing of an unannounced catastrophic event.

1. White House EO 14239: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/
2. PHEMCE 2024 Strategy and Implementation Plan: https://aspr.hhs.gov/PHEMCE/2024-PHEMCE-SIP/Documents/2024-PEHMCE-SIP-508.pdf
3. DOE Strategic Petroleum Reserve: https://www.energy.gov/hgeo/opr/spr-quick-facts
4. DLA Strategic Materials: https://www.dla.mil/Strategic-Materials/
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